(b) if so, the action being taken by Government to properly repair and maintain the bridge and make it fit for human use; and

(c) the action being contemplated against the officials for giving wrong information?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTAPATIL): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

National Conference of Project Director of DRDA

4556. SHRI RAVULACHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Conference of Project Directors of Districts Rural Development Agency has taken place;

(b) if so, the details of discussion held and decisions arrived at;

(c) whether DRD As are playing a vital role as catalyst of development in rural India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir. The last Conference of Project Directors of Districts Rural Development Agencies took place on 16th and 17th October, 2006.

(b) In the Conference, detailed discussions were held on NREGA, NFFWP, SGRY, SGSY, DRDA Admn., National Rural Housing Policy and permanent lAY wetlist;, Area Development Programmes, Drinking Water, Total Sanitation Campaign, Monitoring and online reporting. After the detailed discussions the Project Directors/CEOs were divided into six groups assigning separate issues/schemes. The leaders of the groups made presentations on the issues assigned and submitted their recommendations. The conference concluded with appreciation of the recommendations with the need for convergence of various programmes for rural development.

(c) and (d) The DRDAs are playing a vital role in effectively managing and overseeing the implementation of different anti-poverty programmes of Ministry of Rural Development. The DRDAs, apart from dealing with anti-poverty programmes of the Ministry, are also entrusted with the programmes of other Ministries or those of the State Governments, which have definite anti-poverty focus. They are also coordinating with other agencies like governmental, non-governmental, technical and financial institutions for successful implementation of the programmes. In addition, DRDAs, coordinate and oversee the conduct of BPL survey data, required from time to time.

Houses for rural poor

4557. SHRI B.J. PANDA:

MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether India needs 169 million houses for the poor;

(b) whether lack of houses for the rural poor is an alarming phenomenon, when over 72 per cent of the population lives in villages; and

(c) if so, what is the action plan of Government to meet this situation especially in the backward States of Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) As per the estimation done by the Office of Registrar General of India, based on 2001 Census, the total housing shortage in the rural areas in India is 148.33 lakh.

(b) and (c) Within the financial resources available, the Government is trying to minimize shelterlessness in rural areas as quickly as possible. Under "Bharat Nirman Programme" 60 lakh houses are envisaged to be constructed during the period of four years from 2005-06 to 2008-09, out of which more than 30 lakh houses have been constructed during the first two years of Bharat Nirman Programme. A Statement showing the number of houses constructed during the period of last two years throughout the country including the States of Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Jharkhand is given below.